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Life of John Sebastian Bach;

WITH A CRITICAL VIEW OF HIS COMPOSITIONS, BY J. N. FORKEL.

CHAPTER I.

If ever there was a family in which an extraordinary disposition for the same art seemed to be hereditary, it was certainly the family of Bach; through six successive generations there were scarcely two or three members of it who had not received from nature the gift of a very distinguished talent for music, and who did not make the practice of this art the main occupation of their lives.

The ancestor of this family, which has become so remarkable in the history of music, was Veit Bach. He was a baker at Presburg, in Hungary; but on the breaking out of the religious troubles in the 16th century, he was obliged to seek for another place of abode. He saved as much of his property as he could, and retired with it to Thuringia, where he hoped to find peace and security. The place in which he settled was called Wechmar, a village near Saxe Gotha. Here he soon recommenced his trade of a baker and miller; but in his leisure hours he amused himself with his guitar, which he even took with him into the mill, and played upon it amidst all the noise and clatter of the mill. He communicated this inclination for music to his two sons, they again to their children, till by degrees there arose a very numerous family, all of whom were not only musical, but made music their chief business, and soon had in their possession most of the offices of chanters, organists, and town musicians in Thuringia.

All these Bachs cannot possibly have been great masters; but some members at least, in every generation, particularly distinguished themselves. Thus already in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, three grandsons of their common ancestor were so eminent, that the then reigning Count of Schwarzburg Arnstadt thought it worth while to send them at his own expense to Italy, at that time the great school of music, to perfect themselves. We cannot say how far they may have answered the expectations of their patron, since none of their works have come down to our times. In the fourth generation there were some mem-

bers of this family who were still more distinguished, and several pieces of whose composition have been preserved, by the care of John Sebastian Bach. The most remarkable of them were—

1st. John Christopher, court and town organist at Eisenach. He was particularly happy in the invention of beautiful melodies, and in the expression of his text. In the archives of the Bachs, as they were called, which C. Ph. Emanuel possessed, in Hamburg, there was among other pieces a motet of his composition, in which he had ventured to make use of the extreme sixth, which in his day was considered an extremely bold attempt. He was also an uncommon master of full harmony, as is proved by a piece of church music composed by him for Michaelmas-day, to the words "Es erhub sich ein Streit," &c. which has twenty-two obligato parts, and yet is perfectly pure in respect to the harmony. A second proof of his great skill in harmony is, that he is stated never to have played on the organ and clavicord with less than five necessary, or obligato parts. C. Ph. Emanuel had a particular esteem for him. It is still quite fresh in my remembrance how good-naturedly the old man smiled at me, at the most remarkable and hazardous passages, when he once gave me the pleasure, in Hamburg, of letting me hear some of those old pieces.

2nd. John Michael, organist and town-clerk, in the Bailliage of Gehren. He was a younger brother of the preceding, and, was, like him, a very excellent composer. In the archives just mentioned, there are some motets of his, among which is one with a double chorus for eight voices, and several single pieces of church music.

3rd. John Bernhard, musician to the Prince's Chapel, and organist at Eisenach. He is said to have composed remarkably fine overtures in the French style.

Not only the above-mentioned, but many other able composers of the earlier generations of the family, might undoubtedly have obtained much more important musical offices, as well as a more extensive reputation, and a more brilliant fortune, if they had been inclined to leave their native province, Thuringia, and to make themselves known in other countries, both in and out of Germany. But we do not find that any one of them ever had an inclination for such an emigration: temperate and frugal by nature and education, they required but little to live, and the intellectual enjoyment which their art procured them, enabled them to be content not only without the gold chains, which used at that time to be given by great men to esteemed artists, as especial marks of honor, but also, without the least envy to see them worn by others, who perhaps, without those chains would not have been happy.

Besides this happy contentedness, which is indispensable to the cheerful enjoyment of life, the different members of this family had a very great attachment to each other. As it was impossible for them all to live in one place, they resolved to see each other at least once a year, and fixed a certain day on which they were all to appear at an appointed place. Even after the family had become much more numerous, and many of the members had been obliged to settle out of Thuringia, in different places of Upper and Lower Saxony, and Franconia, they continued their an-

nual meetings, which generally took place at Erfurt, Eisenach, or Arnstadt. Their amusements during the time of their meeting were entirely musical. As the company wholly consisted of chanters, organists, and town musicians, who had all to do with the church, and it was besides a general custom to begin everything with religion, the first thing they did when they were assembled, was to sing a hymn in chorus. From this pious commencement they proceeded to drolleries, which often made a very great contrast with it. They sang, for instance, popular songs, the contents of which were partly comic, and partly licentious, all together and extempore, but in such a manner, that the several songs thus extemporized, made a kind of harmony together, the words, however, in every part being different. They called this kind of extemporary chorus, "a Quodlibet," and not only laughed heartily at it themselves, but excited an equally hearty and irresistible laughter in everybody that heard them; some persons are inclined to consider these facetiae as the beginning of comic operettas in Germany; but such Quodlibets were usual in Germany at a much earlier period: I possess, myself, a printed collection of them, which was published in Vienna in 1542.

Yet the above-mentioned cheerful Thuringians, as well as some of their later descendants, who made a more serious and worthy use of their art, would not have escaped oblivion, had not, at length, a man arisen among them, whose genius and reputation beamed forth with such splendor, that a part of this light was reflected upon them; this man was John Sebastian Bach, the ornament of his family, the pride of his country, and the most highly-gifted favorite of the musical art.

CHAPTER II.

JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH was born March 21, 1685, at Eisenach, where his father, John Ambrosius, was musician to the court and to the town. This J. A. Bach had a twin-brother, John Christopher, who was musician to the court and town at Arnstadt, and was so very like him, that even their own wives could not distinguish them, except by their dress. These twins were perhaps singular in their kind, and the most remarkable ever known. They tenderly loved each other; their voice, disposition, the style of their music, and everything, in short, was alike in them. If one was ill, the other was so likewise: they died also within a short time of each other. They were a subject of astonishment to all who saw them.

In the year 1695, when John Sebastian was not quite ten years of age, his father died: he had lost his mother at an earlier period. Being left an orphan, he was obliged to have recourse to an elder brother, John Christopher, who was organist at Ordruff. From him he received the first instruction in playing on the clavicord. But his inclination and talent for music must have been very great at that time, since the pieces his brother gave him to learn were so soon in his power, that he began, with much eagerness, to look out for some that were more difficult. The most celebrated composers for the clavicord in those days were Froberger, Fischer, John Casp. Kerl, Pachelbel, Buxtehude, Bruhns, Böhm, &c. He had observed that his brother had a book in which there were several pieces of the above-mentioned

authors, and earnestly begged him to give it to him; but it was constantly denied him. His desire to possess the book was increased by the refusal, so that he at length sought for means to get possession of it secretly. As it was kept in a cupboard which had only a lattice-door, and his hands were still small enough to pass through, so that he could roll up the book, which was merely stitched in paper, and draw it out, he did not long hesitate to make use of these favorable circumstances. But for want of a candle he could only copy it in moonlight nights; and it took six whole months before he could finish his laborious task. At length, when he thought himself safely possessed of the treasure, and intended to make good use of it in secret, his brother found it out, and took from him, without pity, the copy which had cost him so much pains; and he did not recover it till his brother's death, which took place soon after.

John Sebastian, being thus again left destitute, went, in company of one of his school-fellows, named Erdmann, afterwards Russian Resident in Dantzic, to Lüneburg, and engaged there in their choir of St. Michael's School as a treble or soprano singer. His fine treble voice procured him here a good livelihood; but he soon lost it, and did not immediately acquire another good voice in its room.

His inclination to play on the clavichord and organ was as ardent at this time as in his more early years, and impelled him to try to see and to hear everything which, according to the ideas he then entertained, would contribute to his improvement. With this view he not only went several times while he was a scholar, from Lüneburg to Hamburg, to hear the organist, John Adam Reincken, who was at that time very famous, but sometimes also to Zell, in order to get acquainted with the prince's band, which consisted chiefly of Frenchmen, and with the French taste, which was then a novelty in those parts.

It is not known on what occasion he removed from Lüneburg to Weimar; but it is certain that he became court musician there in 1703, when he was just eighteen years of age. He exchanged this place, in the following year, for that of organist to the new church at Arnstadt, probably to be able to follow his inclination for playing on the organ, better than he could do at Weimar, where he was engaged to play the violin. Here he began most zealously to make use of all the works of the organists at that time celebrated, which he could procure in his situation, to improve both in composition and the art of playing on the organ; and to gratify his desire of learning, even made a journey on foot to Lubeck, to hear Diederich Buxtehude, organist to St. Mary's church in that city, with whose compositions he was always acquainted. For almost a year he remained a secret hearer of this organist, who was really a man of talent, and much celebrated in his times, and then returned with an increased stock of knowledge to Arnstadt.

The efforts of his zeal and persevering diligence must have already excited great attention at this time, for he received, in quick succession, several offers of places as organist. Such a place was offered to him in the year 1707, in the church of St. Blasius at Mühlhausen, which he accepted. But a year after he had entered upon it, making a journey to Weimar to perform before the reigning duke, his performance on the organ was so highly approved of, that he was offered the place of court organist, which he accepted. The extended sphere of action for his art in which he here lived, impelled him to exert himself to the utmost; and it was probably during this period that he not only made himself so able a performer on the organ, but also laid the foundation of his great compositions for that instrument. He had still further occasion to improve in his art when his prince, in 1717, appointed him director of the concerts, in which office he had to compose and execute pieces of sacred music.

Handel's master, Zachau, organist at Halle, died about this time; and J. S. Bach, whose reputation was now already high, was invited to succeed him. He, in fact, went to Halle, to prove his qualifications, by performing a piece as a spe-

cimen of his skill. However, for what reason is not known, he did not enter upon the office, but left it to a noble scholar of Zachau's, of the name of Kirckhof.

[To be continued.]

The Band of George the Fourth.

From a Correspondent of the Brighton (Eng.) Gazette.

The Private Band of George IV. was, in its time, acknowledged to be one of the best in Europe. It was originally formed from the band of the 10th Hussars, of which regiment the king, when Prince of Wales, was the colonel. The prince, being a good amateur on the violoncello, and passionately fond of music, took the greatest interest in bringing this band to such perfection, that it was universally acknowledged "to have no equal," and became ultimately of European celebrity. No musician of any importance came to this country without visiting Brighton to hear the prince's band. Various methods were resorted to in order to obtain the most proficient talent. Christian Kramer, a Hanoverian and pupil of Winter, was placed at the head. He was a remarkable man. As an arranger for a large military band he was almost unequalled; the quantity that he did for this band was prodigious. Part of it consisted of the whole of Mozart's symphonies, all his overtures, the grand finales to his operas, besides all the choicest trios, duets, etc., all the symphonies of Haydn, several of Beethoven's, Rossini's and Paer's overtures, with the grand finales of their operas, Boieldieu's works, Cherubini's overtures, *Anacreon*, *Lodoiska*, and *Les deux Journées*, the whole of the opera of Mehul's *Joseph*, and the best of Handel's choruses. The books accumulated to such a degree that 300 were nightly given out in boxes placed beside the stands, which were made of solid mahogany, each lighted by two wax candles. No one knew the capabilities, capacities, and the good effects to be brought out of the various instruments better than Kramer; he played almost every one over which he presided, and could dictate the best mode of fingering any difficult passage that occurred. Like his royal master, Kramer was a great sufferer from the gout, and it was no unusual thing to hear the king, after a simultaneous attack, inquiring of Kramer what were the means adopted to rid himself of so troublesome a companion, and many were the jokes that passed between them on those occasions, for Kramer piqued himself upon being a wit, and was quite at ease with his royal master.

The ships bringing French prisoners from Spain were examined for the purpose of finding any musical talent that might be in them; and Eisert, a German, was transposed from a prison to a palace to become the first and most brilliant player of the clarionets. Kramer periodically visited Germany, and engaged the best talent he could find. The following was the strength of the band in its best days: 12 clarionets, 3 oboes, 3 flutes, 4 bassoons, 2 corni bassetti, 4 horns, 4 trumpets, 2 serpents, 4 trombones, bass, 2 trombones, alto and tenor, 2 drums; total, 42.

When it is considered that every individual of this number was of first-rate talent, some idea may be formed of the effect such an assemblage of wind instruments would produce. Most of the cleverest players had individually been masters of bands. Schmidt was allowed to be the first trumpet in Europe. His flourish was the most terrific and appalling thing ever heard from a musical instrument. The trumpets and kettle drums were of solid silver. The elder Distin was one of the trumpets. The horns, Messrs. Hardy, were very clever performers, whether as regards taste, tone, or execution. They are now the horns of her present Majesty's Private Band. The serpent, André, was one of the lions of the band. Kramer had taken great pains to render this hitherto difficult instrument more available. He invented an instrument that was played entirely with keys instead of holes for the fingers; and no musical visitor of any eminence came without hearing André's performance of one of Corelli's trios. Weitzig was the 1st Fagotto; he became afterwards master of the Guards (Blue's) Band.

Albrecht, Schroeder, and Berhns were the trombones, and most efficient ones they were.

When the band was in its infancy, two celebrated horn players, the Rehn's, joined it; one, afterwards, the prince took much notice of. At that time it was no unusual thing to see the prince's arm linked in Rehn's, giving directions and instructions. In after years it was an interesting sight, when the king was visited by some of the ambassadors, such as Prince Esterhazy, Prince Lieven, etc., to see him conducting a symphony of Mozart's or Haydn's, as was often his habit. That was the time to hear the band to perfection. Bands do not every day get a regal conductor; and, on these occasions, every one did his utmost, which was sure to call forth flattering expressions from His Majesty, such as "Charmingly played," "That I call perfection," "You have outdone yourselves to-night." On other occasions, when affairs of State troubled him, the players were often made to feel his displeasure. One night, during the queen's trial, he was sitting close to the band, apparently paying little attention to what they were playing, when he surprised them all by suddenly saying, "I suppose, because you are all asleep, you think that I am. There is an old saying, that birds that can sing and won't sing, must be made to sing; and I will make you play that better. Now play it over again." Of course, this screwed up their attention and exertion to the highest pitch; and it was played to his satisfaction on the repetition.

"Kramer, what is the matter with Distin to night?" exclaimed his Majesty on another occasion. "Your Majesty, he has a bad lip." "Oh, I thought something was the matter, as I missed the trumpet in the last piece." From some disappointment, Kramer was obliged, one morning, to officiate at the organ in the chapel. "Who played the organ this morning?" inquired his Majesty. Kramer replied, "not the organist in ordinary to your Majesty; but your Majesty's ordinary organist." The old German would chuckle at his success. Little episodes such as these were often occurring, which served to prove the critical attention his Majesty paid to the performance. One evening with the Princess Lieven on his arm, standing close in front of the band, who were playing Handel's choruses, he said to the Princess, "How delighted my poor father would have been, could he have heard Handel's music played in this manner." Occasionally, of a Sunday evening, a selection of the sacred choruses was sung by a portion of the band and some of the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral. One evening they were surprised by his Majesty wedging himself between two of the performers, and, catching hold of one side of the book held by Spellerberg, the oboe player, his Majesty joined lustily in the bass part of the chorus to the end.

When Rossini visited England, he was commanded to spend three days with the King, who was then at the Pavilion. A very large party of the nobility were invited to see the great maestro. Before the band commenced, he said to Rossini: "You shall now hear an overture of a composer that we hold in the highest estimation." And the band played Rossini's overture to *La Gazza Ladra*, which had been previously agreed upon.

Sir Henry (then Mr.) Bishop, arrived one night at Kramer's residence, just as he was leaving home for the Pavilion. "Come with me to the palace," said Kramer. "I cannot, I am not dressed." He had a smart drab surcoat coat, and was a man who took considerable pains with his toilet. "Come and hear the band; you have no occasion to be seen; you can stand at the back of the orchestra." Sir Henry consented. Upon the King's coming up to give some direction to Kramer, the latter (who was fond of a little mischief, where a dandy was concerned) immediately said to the King: "Mr. Bishop is here, your majesty, but he is not dressed, and does not wish to be seen." "Oh, hang his dress, ask him to come forward." Poor Bishop was obliged to present himself in his drab coat; but no one could say agreeable things with more grace than the King. He told Bishop he was most happy to see him, and directed the band to play his composition, the "Chough and Crow," adding, "I hope

you will name whatever you wish them to play." The evening passed so agreeably to Bishop that he quite forgave Kramer.

Perhaps the most effective pieces performed by this famous body of instrumentalists were Beethoven's symphony in C minor—the grand military character of the last movement told with more effect on this than on a stringed band; Mozart's *Jupiter*, and his No. 5 symphony in E flat; the finales to the second acts of *Don Giovanni* and *Il Barbiere*; a chorus from Winter's *Proserpine*; the overture to *Anacreon* of Cherubini; "The horse and his rider" of Händel; the quartet from *Marino Faliero*. Nothing could exceed (in a military point of view—Ed. M. W.) the volume of tone, the light and shade, and the vigor and brilliancy with which those pieces were performed.

The band used to practice daily from eleven to one in the palace during that portion of the year when the King was not in Brighton, but when the court was here the practice was discontinued, and they merely attended in the evening from nine until eleven. The expenses amounted to between six and seven thousand pounds annually. On evenings of attendance, each performer was provided with a supper, a pint of wine, and ale, in addition to his pay. In a fit of economy, on one occasion, the wine, allowed to the household up to a certain range, was ordered to be discontinued: it was consequently stopped from the band, and doleful were their looks when assembled for the evening. Whether designedly, or not, the vigor of their style was considerably diminished, and Lord Conyngham was sent by the King to say that he thought they did not play with their usual spirit. Kramer, who had been waiting for his opportunity, immediately replied: "How can they play with their proper spirit, my Lord, when they have cut off their wine." This, as was anticipated, was taken to the King, who ordered the wine to be allowed as usual, and it was never afterwards discontinued.

When the King ceased to reside in Brighton, the Band, much to their regret, removed to Windsor, where they continued until the King's death, occasionally playing at Cumberland Lodge, or attending His Majesty in those delightful fêtes on Virginia Water. At his death, some received a pension, others, of short service, a gratuity; but the Band was entirely broken up, several of the old Germans returning to Brighton: Brighton was everything to many of them. They had risen with the town, grown with its growth, had family ties and connections in the place, and they came here to end their days. Many of them are gone. It was a sad pity that so fine a body of musicians, brought to such perfection, should have been dispersed; but a spirit of economy came over the successors of George the Fourth, who, with all his faults, was a kingly, munificent, and real lover of music. As regards the Band, "Take it for all in all, we shall ne'er look upon its like again."

Another Letter from a Country Singing Teacher.

M——, Oct. —, 1855.

JOHN S. DWIGHT, Esq.,

Dear Sir:—Your kindness in printing my letter leads me to trespass upon you again. You have proved that you are willing to let both sides be heard, and what is better, are willing yourself to grant a respectful hearing, even to those who are not always using the pen. I wish again to have my say about Psalmody, and that, too, in view of an opinion several times expressed in the course of your Journal, that a few dozen or scores of good solid choral tunes are all that we need. I think I am stating the idea correctly.

Now I am not exactly qualified, perhaps, to argue the matter from any general principles, and very likely I may be influenced by my personal interest. I am willing to grant this; but I can certainly come forward as a witness, simply stating what my experience is and has been, and if this testimony be reliable, it must have its weight so far as it goes.

I gave you a reason before, as a teacher of country

singing classes, why I am in favor of allowing the book-making business to go on; I shall try now, as a leader of the singing in a country church, to give you a reason or two why I cannot agree with you in confining our singing to a few dozen solid tunes. I notice in reading the reports in your Journal of all sorts of musical performances, that the same piece is not very often repeated; but that when this is the case they are very soon spoken of as "hackneyed." As an instance, in noticing a certain concert, it is stated that the orchestra played the "hackneyed" overture so and so. On another occasion a humorous article offered a reward for a new tune for pianists and violinists to play. On another occasion one of your most frequent correspondents mentioned certain songs, which he said all the public singers sing, until he had "rather hear Yankee Doodle ground on a hand organ."

Now, Sir, imagine yourself living in the country, and following to the full extent our country habits, of going to church twice every Sunday, as well as on Fast days and Thanksgivings once. You would then have in the course of the year—as we sing three times to each service—318 times; not to mention the evening meetings, occasional sermons, and on most Sundays an extra service or lecture in the evening. Imagine this going on year after year, and if you, like many of the people who worship in the church where I am employed, were always there, rain or shine, I think you would in time wish to have your few dozen tunes increased by some of the newer article.

And, putting your tastes as a hearer out of the question, imagine yourself a member of the choir. When you first join the choir the feelings with which you rise and join in the hymn are those only of pleasure, and you look forward to Sunday with delight. But after a year or two, being one of the singers, or, as we express it, "sitting in the seats," loses its novelty, and gradually you find that to a certain extent this portion of the divine service is settling upon your shoulders, and you begin to feel it a duty which you must perform. Some of your fellow members of the choir move out of town, some are taken sick, some, I am sorry to say, will get put out with somebody or something, some will be led to join the choir in another church, and before you know it you have become a leading person in the singer's gallery, and more of the responsibility is resting upon you than you could wish. The tunes, which two years ago you thought so good, have lost their charm, and you grow tired to death of the same old thing over and over again. This cannot be otherwise.

But there are tunes which never can wear out, you may say; why not sing them? As to this point, Sir, we differ. We get weary of the best things, whether in singing or in anything else, if we can have no change. Now, what I call the best things, are not always what my singers feel to be such.—They have not the necessary amount of practice in singing all sorts of tunes to enable them to feel the truest and best, nor are they so widely advanced in the art of singing as to be able to give these best things that expression and taste, which is what makes them best.

I remember at Mr Perkins's church, at Weymouth Landing, some years ago, having heard what I then thought about the finest congregational church music I ever heard. That was easily accounted for. In that society a few really cultivated persons had taken the singing in charge years before and had remained true to their posts, so that the same faces and voices were to be seen and heard year after year, and with their experience their power of executing good music and their taste for it continually improved. They, however, in the matter of new music, held very different opinions from those I am opposing.

And this leads me to a point, which seems to have

been forgotten by those who have written in the papers upon singing in the churches.

The amount of disposable force for the singing seats—so to speak—in our country churches, at least, depends upon the size of the congregation, as but a small number of the scattered inhabitants of a country town of farmers and small mechanics really make such attainments as to make them of service in singing. Now the great evil is that every fifty or sixty families must have their own meeting house. A few Methodists, a few Baptists, a few Unitarians, and a few Calvinists compose the town, and each sect has its church, and must furnish a choir—for, say what you will, our people have not yet attained so much musical culture as to keep up anything like congregational singing. The choir is necessarily small, and unfortunately the women's voices are almost invariably supplied only by the young girls and unmarried, for when they marry and the domestic cares of a farm fall upon them, there is at once an end of the singing in church.

We, then, in these cases, have neither the force for an adequate performance of your grand old chorals, nor have we, nor can we have the skill, knowledge, taste and experience necessary for really fine music. We must, Sir, do the best we can. If you can elevate the standard of culture any faster than we singing teachers are endeavoring to do it, we beg of you to do so. If it was possible to prevent the cutting up of one society of a respectable size into half a dozen little squads, there would be more hope. As it now is, I do not see any other way than to keep singing easy tunes, and as fast as these are worn out to buy new books and learn new ones. Where I am living, the town being larger and the society in which I sing being also large, other influences are at work, which, with your permission, I will try to explain at another time.

Respectfully Yours, P. E. G.

For Dwight's Journal of Music.

THE BRIDGE.

FROM GRAF VON ALEXISBERG.

There's a wondrous bridge, my lady,
In the softest clime I know,
Where with sweetest breath of balsam
Winds of Spring eternal blow.

From one heart unto another
Leads this bridge's wondrous way;
Love it is who guards the portal,
Opes to those who own his sway.

Love it is the bridge that buildeth,
Roses are the means supplied;
O'er it soul seeks soul in union,
As a bridegroom seeks his bride.

Love has spanned and capped the arches,
Decked it with its fair array;
Love, too, gathereth the taxes,
Kisses are the tolls to pay.

Wouldst thou willingly, sweet maiden,
See this wondrous bridge of mine,
Then it is that thou must lend me,
If we build it, help of thine.

From thy brow then drive the shadows,
Smile but on me, if thou wilt!
Then let's lay our lips together
And the bridge will soon be built.

W.

M. Vivier at Baden.

After the fireworks and the illumination, the concert commenced.

On this occasion, M. Vivier arrived with his horn; not a false Vivier, not a second-hand Vivier, but the true Vivier, the only Vivier, in a word, Vivier. The public saluted him with thunders of applause before seeing or hearing him; but that was nothing to what they did afterwards.

There are some incredulous persons who assert

that M. Vivier slightly resembles Schamyl; they are not sure that he really exists.

"He is a myth," say some; "He is a symbol," remark others. "In ancient times, Theseus was the personification of strength, and Pirithoüs of friendship. In the same manner, Vivier is the personification of the horn."

Now that Paganini is dead, how many people affirm that he never lived!

It is very certain that this theory has its inviting side, which is capable of shaking the most deeply-rooted conviction.

"Look for your M. Vivier," persons have said to me, "and find him if you can."

All of a sudden we heard that he was at Constantinople.

"A horn-player among the Turks! Is it likely? It is true that Schamyl is reported to be in Circassia, but who ever saw him?"

Another day there was a rumor that he had just given a concert at Moscow.

Now, every one knows that Moscow was burnt down.

Later, he was said to be at Smyrna or Liverpool. Why not at Quebec or Ispahan?

After all, however, Vivier—Vivier, body and bones, the real Vivier, alive and kicking, performed on the horn, last Saturday, at half-past nine o'clock in the evening, at Baden. Fifty people saw him.

He played very little, but he did play. The only piece he played, in the midst of the most profound silence, is entitled "La Chasse;" he composed it for himself, and I doubt if any living man but himself could execute it.

Formerly, Lucullus dined with Lucullus; at present Vivier works for Vivier.

Any person who has not heard him can form no idea of his playing. Tradition stops at it. His horn is not a horn; it is an instrument without a name, which sighs like a flute or thunders like the trumpets of Jericho. In the hands of Vivier, the horn is doubled—trebled. It is heard by his side, it is heard in the distance, it is heard here, it is heard there—it approaches, retreats, it bursts out, it calls upon itself, and it replies—it is the sound and the echo in itself alone.

Old chroniclers speak of fairy-horses, which were always running and could never die. M. Vivier makes me believe in fairy-horns: his is the soul of the Black Huntsman speaking.—*Assemblée Nationale.*

ELEGY.

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
In every clime, from Lapland to Japan;
To fix one spark of beauty's heavenly ray,
The proper study of mankind is man.

Tell—for you can—what it is to be wise,
Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain,
The man of Ross, each lisping babe replies,
And drags, at each remove, a length'ning chain.

Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb
Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
Procrastination is the thief of time,
Let Hercules himself do what he may.

'Tis education forms the common mind,
The feast of reason and the flow of soul—
I must be cruel only to be kind,
And waft a sigh from Indus to the pole.

Syphax, I joy to meet thee thus alone,
Where'er I roam, whatever lands I see;
A youth, to fortune and to fame unknown,
In maiden meditation fancy free.

Farewell! and whoso'er thy voice be tried,
Why to yon mountain turns the gazing eye?
With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,
That teach the native moralist to die.

Pity the sorrows of a poor old man,
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast;
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can,
Man never is but always to be blest.

MILWAUKEE, July 16, 1855.

A Curious Sermon.

The Brandon (Mississippi) *Register* reports the following curious sermon preached at the town of Waterproofs, not far from Brandon:—

I may say to you, my brethering, that I am not an edecated man, and I am not one o' them as bleeves that edecation is necessary for a gospel minister, for I bleeve the Lord edecates his preachers jest as he wants 'em to be edecated, an', although I say it that oughtn't to say it, yet in the state o' Indianny, whar I live, thar's no man as gits a bigger congregation nor what I gits.

Thar may be some here to-day, my brethering, as don't know what persuasion I'm uv. Well, I may say to you, my brethering, that I'm a Hardshell Baptist. Thar's some folks as don't like the Hardshell Baptists, but I'd rather hear Hardshell as no shell at all. You see me here to-day, my brethering, drest as in fine close; you must think I was proud, but I am not proud, my brethering, and although I've been a preacher uv the gospel for twenty years, an' although I'm capting of that flat boat that lies at yure landing, I'm not proud, my brethering.

I'm not a gwine ter tell you *edzackly* whar my tex may be found; suffice it to say it's in the leds of the Bible, an' you'll find it somewhar 'tween the first chapter uv the Book uv Generations and the last chapter uv the Book uv Revolutions, an' ef you'll go and sarch the Scriptures, as I have sarched the Scriptures, you'll not only find my tex thar, but a great many other *texes* as will do you good to read, an' my tex, when you shill find it you shill find it to read this:

"An' he played on a harp uv a thousand strings—sperits of just men made perfeck."

My tex, brethering, leads me to speak uv sperits. Now thar's a great many kinds uv sperits in the world—in the first place, thar's the sperits as some folks call ghosts, and then thar's the sperits of turpentine, and then thar's the sperits as some folks call liquor; an' I've got as good an' artikel of them kind uv sperits on my flatboat as ever was fitched down the Mississippi river, but thar's a great many other kinds of sperits, for the tex sez:—"He played on a harp uv a thousand strings—sperits uv just men made perfeck."

But I'll you the kind uv sperits as is meant in the tex, its *fire*. That's the kind uv sperits as is meant in the tex, my brethering. Now thar's a great many kinds of fire in the world. In the first place, thar's the common sort uv fire you lite a segar or a pipe with, and then thar's cam fire, fire before yure redly and fall back, and many other kinds uv fire, for the tex sez: "He played on a harp uv a thousand strings—sperits of just men made perfeck."

But I'll tell you the kind uv fire as is ment in the tex, my brethering—its *hell fire*! and thar's the kind uv fire as a great many uv you'll come to, ef you don't do better nor what you've bin doin'—for "He played on a harp uv a thousand strings—sperits uv just men made perfeck."

Now, the different sorts of fire in the world may be likened unto the different persuasions of Christians in the world. In the first place we have the Piscapalions; an' they are a high sailin' and a high falutin set, and they may be likened unto a turkey buzzard, that flies up into the air, and he goes up and up, till he looks no bigger than your finger nail, and the fust thing you know he cums down and down, and down and down, and is a fillin' himself on the karkiss uv a dead hoss, by the side uv the road—and "he played on a harp uv a thousand strings—sperits uv just men made perfeck."

And then thar's the Methodist, and they may be likened unto the squirrel, runnin' up into a tree, for the Methodist bleeves gwine on from one degree uv grace to another, and finally on to perfeckshun, and the squirrel goes up and up, and up and up, and he jumps from lim' to lim' and branch to branch, and the fust thing you know he falls and down he cums kerklummux, and that's like the Methodist, for they is allers fallin' from grace ah!—and—"He played on a harp of a thousand strings—sperits of just men made perfeck."

And, then, my brethering, thar's the Baptist ah! and they hev bin likened unto a possum on a 'simmon tree, and the thunders may roll, and the earth may quake, but that possum clings there still ah! And you may shake one foot loose, and the other's thar, and you may shake all feet loose, and he laps his tail round the limb, and he clings furever, for—"He played on a harp uv a thousand strings—sperits of just men made perfeck."

Musical Correspondence.

NEW YORK, OCT. 22.—Musical gossip is rife here, and I snatch a few minutes to give you some items. The Academy is languishing along with old operas and very poor audiences. Last night *Norma* was given "for the last time" (in America, I hope.) *Le Prophète* will soon be produced with great splendor, and the public hangs back for it. Meanwhile, the following new engagements are announced: Sig. SALVIANI, *primo tenore*, from Florence; Sig. CASPIANI, *primo basso*, Milan; Mlle. DERLI-PATAMA, *prima donna*, Munich; and Mlle. VENTALDI, *seconda donna* and *contralto*.

Mlle. RACHEL, on her return from Boston, will perform at the Academy on the off nights.

On dit, that MARETZKE is going to leave 14th Street, and, together with STRAKOSCH, PARODI and VESTVALI (who is not going to Mexico after all) open the Metropolitan as an opposition house to the Academy.

At Niblo's, the PYNE troupe close at the end of next week. To-night "Rip Van Winkle" was given for Mr. BRISTOW's benefit, to a crowded house I hear, and on Friday, Mr. HARRISON, for his benefit, gives Fawcett's adaptation of "The Barber."

At Burton's, there is a small English opera troupe, with Miss ROSALIE DURAND as *Prima Donna*. They have been performing an adaptation of Boieldieu's "John of Paris" and have done it very well, it is said.

Mr. EISEFELD has returned in good health, and weighs about two or three times as much as when he left. He will resume his quartet soirées during the winter.

Mr. BERGMANN and WILLIAM MASON intend giving a series of six musical matinées.

To conclude, I will give you a musical marriage announcement: Mr. STEPHEN LEACH, late basso of the Seguin and Thillon troupes, was united last Saturday evening to Mrs. GEORGINA STUART, our amiable and talented *Prima Donna*. A long and happy career to them. R.

Musical Chat-Chat.

The Orchestral Concerts in the Music Hall will commence on the 10th or 17th of next month. The orchestra of fifty is complete, the prospect of a large audience morally certain, and the leading features of a rich opening programme fixed. These will be Beethoven's Seventh Symphony; Mendelssohn's G minor Concerto, played by OTTO DRESEL; an overture by Mendelssohn (either "Fingal's Cave" or "Midsummer Night's Dream"); perhaps, too, the *Leonora* overture of Beethoven; probably the first finale (for orchestra) from *Don Juan*; and in each part some singing worthy of the occasion:—thus mingling the grave and the gay, the solid and the brilliant in attractive and edifying proportions. . . . Mlle. PARODI and STRAKOSCH had a third brilliant concert on Saturday evening, and have to a considerable degree kept up the interest through three extra concerts during this crowded "gala week" of Boston, and in spite of the nightly almost all-absorbing attractions of RACHEL. . . . The old HANDEL and HAYDN SOCIETY, it will be seen, announce their annual series of Six Oratorio Concerts, in the Music Hall, at the exceedingly low price of *two dollars* for the series. The first oratorio will be Handel's "Solomon", never before given in this city, or this country. We have heard some of the choruses under Mr. ZERRAHN's careful drill, and found them full of beauty, variety and true Handelian vigor. The opening is fixed for Sunday evening, Nov. 18th.

We are glad to learn that a series of six concerts, and five or six lectures for the people, at people's prices, are to be given in the Music Hall, under the auspices of the Artizan's Recreative Union, an excellent institution apparently, of which we shall have more to say. For the concerts Miss PHILLIPS, Miss TWICHELL, Miss BOTHAMLY, Mr. MILLARD, Mr. WETHERBEE, Mr. ADAMS, Mr. MOZART, and the Germania Serenade Band have been engaged. Tickets one dollar for the series. That is the true way to keep out intemperance and vulgarity: pre-occupy the moral elements that grow intemperate with wholesome, genial excitements. Provide cheap and refined amusements.

Messrs. SCHULTZE, JUNGNIKEL and CARL HAUSE gave a concert of classical and popular music in Worcester last week, assisted by the vocal talent of Miss BOTHAMLY. Mr. Hause played a piano concerto by Hummel, and the three the Andante with variations, from Beethoven's Trio in C minor. Instrumental solos, duets and songs made out the feast, which "Stella" says was a rich one; yet either politics stood in the way, or "some one had blundered", for

Into the City Hall
Walked but two hundred.

—"Stella" judges from the advertising columns of one of the New York dailies that the banjo is the favorite musical instrument in that city.

Congregational singing has been introduced at Rev. Dr. Alexander's church, Fifth Avenue, New York. One of Jardine's organs is placed behind the pulpit, and is played by WILLIAM MASON. Dr. LOWELL MASON leads the singing, and the whole people join, supported by some of the stronger voices which are placed in the front side-seats. The *Review* says that "the tunes selected are appropriate in their rhythmic and melodic structure," and describes the effect as being grand. . . . CARL BERGMANN, in his capacity of violoncellist, and WILLIAM MASON, as pianist, propose a series of six musical matinees in New York, with a view of extending the circle of those acquainted, as all refined society should be, with the masterworks of chamber music, especially "such quartets, quintets, trios, sonatas, and the like, as have not before been heard in New York in public." These must prove a valuable auxiliary to the good work going on under the auspices of the Philharmonic Society and EISEL's quartet party, who are preparing to resume their classical soirées. . . .

Signor Roncari's new opera company are to commence in Mexico next week. The operas for the first month are to be *Norma*, *I Montecchi* e *Capuletti*, *Luisa Miller*, *Semiramide*, *Lucrezia* and *Lucia*; each month a new opera will be produced, including *Rigoletto*, *Trocatore*, *Tancredi*, and *Prophète*. The troupe comprises: primadonnas, Mlle. Delmonte and Madame Manzini; contralto, Mlle. Vestvali; tenors, Graziani and Gianconi; baritones, Z. Winter and Walther; bass, Garone; an orchestra of forty, and a chorus of thirty-six: all under the direction of L. Winter, a son of the celebrated German composer.

A writer of musical reminiscences in the *Musical Review* recalls a remark of "old THOMASCHKE, in Prague, the master of so many masters in our art, who used to say, that whenever he heard an artist singing at one moment *pianissimo*, at the next *fortissimo*, it reminded him of a large door, which was softly opened, only to be shut immediately afterwards with a tremendous noise." There was quite a rage, he adds, among the artists to illustrate this remark; but of late years, with the exception of some Italians, all the singers seem to have got rid of the door-clapping style, except the celebrated baritone, PRISCHEK, and the English tenor, SIMS REEVES.

Among the antiquities of Newport, R. I., is an organ, the gift of Bishop Berkeley, of which we find the following notice:

"It was also after his arrival in England, in 1733, that he presented the organ to Trinity church, at Newport, which is still surmounted by the crown of the olden time, and which bears an inscription that it is the gift of Dr. George Berkeley, late Lord Bishop of Cloyne. This organ was originally forwarded to America by the Dean as a gift to the town of Berkeley, in Massachusetts, which had been named after him. The select men of the town, however, were not prepared to harbor so dangerous a guest, and voting that 'an organ is an instrument of the devil, for the entrapping the souls of men,' declined the offer; when the Dean conferred it on Trinity. It still sends forth its strains from some of the old pipes.

"It is said that there is another claimant for the honors of the organ, in a church of Brooklyn, N. Y. The story goes that the Newport organ, being out of repair, was sent to New York to be put in order. A portion of the pipes were found to be so defective that it was considered expedient to replace them by new ones, which were provided, and forwarded in the old case. It afterwards occurred to a workman that the old metal should not be thrown away; so he restored the rejected pipes, and they were set up in a new case in the Brooklyn church. Mason states: 'The original case, of English oak, is still in use in the church, and it contains a part of the old works, with the addition of such pipes as was found necessary when it was rebuilt a few years ago.'

. . . The Philadelphia opera house is fast becoming a reality; the *Bulletin* reports progress as follows:

The work on the splendid building for the American Academy of Music, at the corner of Broad and Locust streets, is progressing rapidly. The first story is nearly up, and the handsome brown stone front on Broad street gives earnest of what the structure will be when completed. The building is very large, and it will inaugurate a new era in Philadelphia in theatrical architecture. The city has never yet had a regular opera house, and the theatres that have been at times appropriated to opera purposes are generally small, inconvenient and not constructed with much regard to the laws of acoustics.

The following particulars in relation to the new Opera House will give our readers an idea of its size and capacity. The building has a front of 140 feet on Broad street, with a depth of 238 feet on Locust street. There will be regular seats for 3000 persons, and stool and standing room for 600 more. The orchestra will be 65 feet long, by 10 feet wide, and will afford ample room for seventy musicians.

The following are the dimensions of the principal parts of the structure:—

Width of stage department 150 feet; width of stage proper, 90 feet; depth 73 feet; width of auditorium between the walls, 90 feet; height to dome, 70 feet; depth from curtain to back of boxes, 102 feet; width of curtain 48 feet; height, 48 feet; width of lobbies, at proscenium, 9 feet, gradually widening at vestibule entrance to 13 feet; entrance of lobby on Broad street, 10 by 73 feet; two main stairways in vestibule, width of each 13 feet; width of same to second tier, 8 feet; to third, 7 feet. The grand saloon, which can be used for concerts, lectures, balls, &c., is 39 by 85 feet; height of same, 30 feet; the number of exit doors is 14, all of them opening outward, comprising a space of 117 feet; so that a full house can be discharged in from four to five minutes; the covered carriage way is 70 feet on Locust street, to curb; width of Broad street pavement, 18 feet; Locust street, do. 12 feet; stage excavation below the floor, 10 feet; under remainder of the house, 8½ feet; heated by steam generated in two boilers. The auditorium is to be illuminated by a circle in the dome, containing 500 jets, also by two rows of jets along the cornices, and by bracket lights against the walls.

There will be ventilating flues throughout the house, connecting with the main ventilating shaft, over the illuminating circle. The parquet entrances are, to wit: two at orchestra, 3 feet wide, gradually enlarging to 6½ feet at lobby, with two additional side entrances, each 5½ feet wide. Numerous other passages throughout the house, leading to seats, commence along the inner circle, being two feet broad, and gradually widening to 4 feet at lobbies. Restaurant in basement, 26 by 62 feet; height of the building to cornice 60 feet. The roof will be of iron, main span 90 feet; passage way on south flank 10 feet; passage way on rear to Westmoreland street 15 feet; a balcony on Broad and also one on Locust street, each 70 feet.

The Leipzig *Signale* gives an interesting account of music at St. Petersburg, from which we translate:

"The attention of the Russian rulers has long been directed toward music. Under Peter the Great al-

ready German musicians came into the country. Under the empress Elizabeth, about the year 1750, one of the best opera troupes from Italy was called to St. Petersburg; twice a week in the winter palace, in the theatre of the Hermitage, which is still standing, they gave representations, to which every respectable person was admitted gratis; the doors were not closed till the hall was full. Under Catherine II. there was one of the best Italian opera companies here, with which the great Cimarosa was connected as composer. At the same time lived here too the celebrated Sarti. At a later period, under Alexander, there was, besides the Italian, also a French opera here, to which belonged the excellent singer Philis-Andrieux, and Boieldieu as composer. Here this distinguished man wrote several of his best operas. At the same time there figured here three of the greatest violinists: Rode, Baillet and Lafont, as also Neukomm and Steibelt as chapel-masters, and the world-renowned pianist, Clementi, who brought here with him his best pupils, Field, Klengel and Berger. The first—the greatest piano-player of all times—remained in Russia till his death.

"Under such favorable auspices it was impossible that St. Petersburg should fall behind other royal residences in Europe in musical taste, and nearly all the celebrities (except Paganini) have visited this city, and several have settled down here for the remainder of their lives, among whom we may name the great singer, Mme. Mara.

That music at the present time is extremely well diffused in Petersburg, is proved by the existence here of twenty music shops, forty piano manufactories, and, it is said, about eight hundred music teachers. The piano here, as everywhere, is most generally in vogue. The most distinguished pianists are: Rubenstein (now in Germany), Gerke, Henselt, Lewy, Kündinger, Jr., Leschetitsky, Frackmann and Vogt. The best violinists: Maurer, father and son, Kontsky, Minkus, Albrecht, Schlosser, Pikel, Kündinger, Sen., Engel, Dwitrieff, Ofanassieff, Ludloff and Latischeff; the four last are Russian born. All the above named violinists are members of the imperial orchestras, of which there are several here. Thus, for example, the Italian opera, the Russian opera, the German theatre, the French Vaudeville, the Ballet and the Circus, each have separate orchestras, of which Louis Maurer fills the place of general inspector. Each member of the orchestra receives, in proportion to his services, from 400 to 700 silver roubles yearly salary, and after fifteen years' service a pension for life of 600 silver roubles, which he may spend where he pleases.

"The Italian opera here consists of the *ne plus ultra* of the throat-artists of Italy and lasts only four months in the year; for which short season a Lagrange, a Grisi, a Mario or Tamberlik draws a salary of 20,000—25,000 silver roubles. There is no Conservatory here, to be sure, but you find an equivalent in the theatre school, where separate classes are organized for singing, instrumental music, and the study of Harmony. Also among the imperial educational institutions there is one in which pupils are specially formed for music. Of musical institutes or academies the following may be named: The Institute of Court singers, which has for its object to train voices for the divine worship of the Court church. Europe has scarcely the equal of this to point to, in all that concerns enchanting voices and perfection of harmony in the most perfect execution. Then there is the Blind Institute, in which there is a whole orchestra composed of the blind. Then the Symphony Society of the students, who every Sunday, under the direction of C. Schubert, give public performances in the splendid hall of the University. Besides this, there is a second Symphony Society of amateurs. Then there are the Sing-akademie of the Germans, which has been in existence these thirty-five years, and makes gratifying progress; the Ger-

man Liedertafel; the Philharmonic Society for sacred music, and several small private musical societies.

"Nor is there any lack of public places of recreation enlivened by music. Among others, you find weekly musical soirées in three different Clubs; five or six different orchestras *à la Strauss* play in public gardens; twice a week there are concerts in the hall of the *Passage Steinbrock*, where the peculiar, yet interesting half-wild song of the Muscovite gipsy bands is to be heard. From all this it may be perceived that music is not the least of the agreeable resources of the Palmyra of the North."

Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, OCT. 27, 1855.

Sunday Evening Concerts.

We alluded last week to the fact that the ice had been broken in the matter of Sacred Concerts in the city of Providence, and a concert given there, for the first time, on Sunday evening of week before last, by Mr. AINER, for the benefit of the Norfolk sufferers. Yet it appears that the ice was only broken, it was not altogether melted. Providence would seem to resemble in this respect one of those secluded valleys where the ice of centuries is stored up still to harden, while the sun makes summer over all the earth. The novelty of the thing, so common elsewhere, seems to have been startling. Various were the opinions called forth. Some approved, but others frowned. Several of the pulpits opened their batteries upon the dangerous innovation, editors of newspapers, forgetting politics and trade, grew scrupulously pious upon the occasion, and gave place in their columns to solemn protests against this unheard of desecration of the Sabbath. For instance, one concludes:

In a word, we do not believe in the propriety of what are called *Sunday Concerts*. For whatever purpose instituted, they cannot be regarded as much short of actual Sabbath desecration. Like any other concert, we buy the music for *self-diversion and pleasure*. So far from *devotion*, it is actually *recreation*. Nor does the sacred character of the music necessarily make the exercise sacred. It is the music, the *vocal harmony* of superior voices, and not the words, that awaken the interest and gather in the people. Let us not be understood as condemning this, as anything *exceedingly* bad, but we say that connecting, as it does, the secular and the religious, *traffic* and *ostensible devotion*, it exerts a most deleterious influence upon the holy and solemn character of the Christian Sabbath.

Another thanks the writer, and among other things says these:

God has given us nights enough, without taking up a portion of the Sabbath for such purposes. If we can find evenings during the week for the exhibition of Uncle Tom, and every thing else that comes along, then we can find a week day evening for a concert in behalf of Norfolk, and to pretend that we must take the Sabbath because we cannot get people out on a week day, is setting a very low estimate on the morals and liberality of Providence.

We cannot believe in the doctrine, that the end sanctifies the means, hence because a *sacred* concert contemplates a benevolent end, therefore it accords with the design of the Sabbath, and may occupy that day. It is very evident that this concert was to be a sort of public entertainment, a time of recreation or amusement. Certainly it was not designed for religious worship in the Christian sense of worship. We doubt whether

any one expected any religious services, whatever, as a part of the programme for the evening. It was to be a kind of social entertainment for a benevolent object. How could Christians look upon such an entertainment in any other light, than a secular affair, wholly irrelevant to the spirit and design of the Sabbath? How then could they patronize it? And how could they but speak out against it, as quite a number of our clergy did on the Sabbath? Let us have the concert, when we can go and not desecrate God's Sabbath and cast a stumbling block before men, which will be a greater evil than all the good we hoped to do.

Here and in most civilized communities it would seem unnecessary and a waste of words to argue such a question at this late day, as if the innocence of listening to good music on a Sunday needed to be proved! But for the sake of the good cause, begun so late in our sister city, it may be worth while to hint a few obvious considerations.

1. The position of these Providence moralists and preachers in this matter is peculiar. It is behind the age; an anomaly in civilized Christendom. America is but a part, the younger part of Christendom. All over Europe, if you except some islands, the Sabbath is not only a *holy* but a *holy-day*. Cheerful, thankful worship, rest, and innocent enjoyment, as of the great family of God's children, is the spirit of it. After the morning services, the day is given up to recreation. Do you protest that this is merely a Roman Catholic abomination, part of a sensual system? Then what have you to say of the example of Protestant Geneva, all whose institutions, manners, habits, bear to this day the stamp of Calvin. That stern reformer himself, it is said, played cards on Sunday. The people of Geneva spend the afternoons and evenings of Sunday in social recreations. In those famous schools for youth, those model schools, at Hofwyl and at Fellenberg, it is a part of the regime to have out-of-door exercises, games of ball, &c. on Sunday afternoon, and music and other social pleasures in the evening.

We have not gone so far as that. With our less genial national character, without our poor understanding (as a people) of the art of enjoying ourselves, we shrink perhaps wisely from the incidental dangers of excess in too much liberty of this sort. We cannot drink without getting drunk. We let liberty run into license. But we cannot suppress the innate craving and necessity for some sort of amusement, some sort of happy and *spontaneous* activity. Hence we do well to give the preference to those amusements which cannot corrupt, and which can and do essentially refine and educate and elevate. Such is Music. Whether "secular" or "sacred," does not altogether matter, (speciality of occasion being left out of the question,) so long as it inspires the soul, and does not merely tickle the ear and lift the feet—so long as it is not frivolous. But even here, even in Puritan New England, in our larger cities, where there are most churches, most schools and most charities, Sunday Concerts, Oratorios, and the like, have grown into a custom. In Boston and New York it is so, and shall they assume that they are so much purer in the half-way house between the two at Providence!

2. Is the moral atmosphere of Providence, then, so very much purer than that of Boston, not to say New York? Can any of those preachers, when he charges his hearers to keep the Sabbath holy after their old solemn fashion, congratulate

them upon their higher average of spirituality, of sobriety, of temperance, of morality, of refinement, and disinterested virtue, as compared with Boston, where for forty years we have been "desecrating the Sabbath" by oratorios and concerts in the evening? Or will any one of them undertake to say he can perceive any new shade of wickedness that has come over the old city, since the concert for the Norfolk sufferers? If it is "setting a low estimate on the morals and liberality" of the Providence people to suppose they cannot have a charity concert without taking Sunday evening for it, much more so is it to suppose they cannot listen to pure, soul-satisfying music without being injured; that they cannot listen to inspiring harmonies without forgetting God; that they cannot quit the solemn posture of devotion without ceasing to be religious. Is religion a formal act, a formal abstinence, or is it a life? Is it a mere affair of *Sun-days*, or is it good in all weathers?

So much for the example of the world and the *exceptional* case of Providence. Now for the intrinsic merits of the case.

3. If it is *theoretically*, with our strict Sabbatarian friends, a question between concerts of music and "concerts of prayer," between seeking pleasure and seeking God, is it not *practically*, must it not ever be with the great mass of people, a question between innocent and edifying amusements on the one hand, and solemn torpor, ennui, illiness, or sneaking sensual recreations, beer-shops and the like, upon the other? If you would keep young people out of low and vulgar haunts of entertainment, you must open for them pleasurable opportunities which tend only to refine and elevate. It is but the lesson taught by the whole history of Christendom, the result of the whole social experience of mankind. Far better send the child to a theatre, than make him sit and suck his thumbs the live-long day in constrained idleness and mental, moral inanition, under the outward form of negatively keeping the day holy:—for this is practically all that the experiment amounts to in the majority of cases. You cannot expel nature with a fork, especially when you put nothing in her place.

4. Good music, even when enjoyed for itself, when unconnected with solemn services, is one of the best outside auxiliaries to all truly sanctifying services. Music in itself has a meaning, and carries a message and a heavenly influence to the heart, the soul. One of the writers quoted above is so ignorant of music as to think that any sacredness attaching to it resides only in the words to which it may be sung; and that since people go to concerts, not for the words, but for the music, therefore they are forsaking God. We most sincerely hope, as the kindest wish of Christian charity, that grace may one day be given to this writer to know and feel what music is.

5. "The concert is not a religious service." All the better that it is not. A whole day can *not* be spent in formal services. If it can, why do we eat? And must not the mind have its periodical refreshment as well as the body? The attempt so to spend it only ends in the reactions referred to, or in that idleness and listlessness in which the mind and the affections run to weeds. How much better to have something, to which the mind may spring with free attraction, and in which it finds, without any solemn purpose or pretence, a cheerful, wholesome aid and confirmation

of all the solemn influences and lessons of the day! How much better music than emptiness and idleness, not to say than drinking, gambling and such popular alternatives!

6. There is such a thing as frivolous and foolish music, as music of a mere sentimental and unnerving character. But there is a plenty, both vocal and instrumental, which humanizes, braces and exalts the soul; which speaks to our deeper, better nature, and nourishes the heavenly faculties, the sympathies with all things great and good, the instincts whereby we feel our relationship with life and love beyond these accidents of time. Mr. Ahner's selection, in the concert in question, was mainly of this kind, and those who really enjoyed the music, we doubt not, were so far the better for it, so far the better subjects for the stated ministrations of each following Sabbath. If they really drank in the strains, their hearts were softened, and the preacher should be thankful the next time he comes to sow his seed.

We trust therefore that the givers of such concerts will go on. It is only a question of time. They are morally sure to melt all opposition in the end; and even now they doubtless have the sympathy and the approval of the larger and the better number, in Providence itself, as well as elsewhere.

RACHEL.—Music this week has been entirely secondary to the excitement of the Drama: BEETHOVEN and MOZART to—not SHAKESPEARE, but to CORNELIUS and RACINE. Those old stilted French tragedies, with their "unities," and their everlasting sing-song Alexandrines, are what few of us, since they were school or college text-books, would ever have felt moved to read again;—rare works of Art they may be in their way, but that way is a dull and thankless one, and not cheered by the least spark of imaginative genius. Yet those old plays—would that they only were "classical," with any of the vitality of *Æschylus* and *Sophocles*!—heard in a foreign language, and with all their tedious dialogue, in which all characters discourse alike, have been made all alive to us, and filled with inspiration not their own by the consummate acting of one woman, whose silent by-play and mere magnetism of look, while she is not speaking, reflects light and meaning over all the rest. In common with all the lovers of high dramatic Art, we have wondered, and have thrilled under the in their way perfect impersonations of RACHEL. The phenomenon, until one has sounded her whole compass, (and we have only seen her *Camille*, *Phædre*, *Tiêbe* and *Andromaque*.) is too strange, as is the physical woman in her beauty strange, for us to attempt yet anything like analysis. We would rather simply accept, wonder and admire. Great it is unquestionably, but in what precise way great, whether the greatest, whether as satisfactory as great, is what we would rather consider after all the evidence is in. Meanwhile we have no room for report of each evening's particulars, and are they not in all the newspapers? But we say, let no one miss the opportunity of seeing Rachel all he can during her short stay.

One word, however, which no one else may think of—it is our own specialty—in compliment to Mr. COMER's orchestra. We have been surprised and pleased at their classical overtures and interludes. One night they gave the overture to Mozart's *Tito*; the next night to *Zauberflöte*; and on the night of "Angelo" were played the overtures to *Iphigenia* (Gluck's) and *Don Juan*, besides any quantity of movements from Haydn's Symphonies. Classical music enough, between the acts of one play, for a Philharmonic Concert!

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